

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

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A CONSULTATION BY NO MEANS SATISFACTORY.

THE GREAT VAN BROEK PROPERTY.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—CAPTAIN JACK FINDS HIMSELF IN A STATE OF PERPLEXITY RESPECTING HIS MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE.

THE unlooked-for, and (to himself) disappointing result of Mr. Swoop's unexpected midnight visit to Mr. Van Broek's town residence in the Fifth Avenue, New York, induced the lawyer to postpone the proposed meeting of witnesses and others at his office. He hoped that he might yet be enabled to induce the patroon in possession to alter his determination, and to adopt measures more consonant with his own interests. With this

object in view, Mr. Swoop waited upon Mr. Van Broek, at the patroon's house, on the morning after the party, and had a long interview with him, in which the subject was discussed in all its bearings. Subsequently several letters passed between the lawyer and the patroon. Thus it was not until noon on the fourth day after the night of the party that the meeting we have referred to was convened at the office in Nassau Street. There were present on the occasion, besides the two lawyers themselves, Captain Jack, Miss Slowbury, the little girl Alice, Mr. Martin the Captain's brother-in-law, Amos Jepson, the old dame Abigail

Copley, and the clergyman from the country village in the State of Pennsylvania, who had been summoned as witnesses for the plaintiff on the occasion of Mr. Julius Van Broek's first appearance as a claimant of the Van Broek property. Each and all of these, with the exception of the child, whose large blue eyes were opened wide with wonder, looked as uneasy and uncomfortable as fish out of water—to use one of Captain Jack's nautical similes—or as a party of comparative strangers generally look, who have assembled together with but a very confused notion of the purpose for which the meeting has been convened.

Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop had held a consultation at an earlier hour, that had been by no means satisfactory. Not only had Mr. Swoop failed to alter the determination at which the patroon had arrived, but the firm had been disappointed of the profits of a lawsuit. They (Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop) had been put to enormous expenses in their endeavours to obtain proof that the patroon's claims to the Van Broek property were untenable; and, instead of paying them handsomely to quash the whole affair, or, failing that, instead of at least disputing his newly-discovered cousin's identity, and contesting his claims (one or other of which courses the lawyers had felt assured that he would pursue), Mr. Van Broek had that very morning sent in to them (as his cousin's solicitors) a written renunciation of his previous claims, and had expressed his regret that he had for a term of three years held possession of property to which he had no right, and declared his intention, without an appeal to the courts, immediately to make such restitution as lay in his power. Now this was, of course, excessively provoking.

"I have made a thorough investigation of your statements," Mr. Van Broek had written, "and, being now fully satisfied that you spoke the truth on the occasion of our first brief interview, I have resolved forthwith to resign my claims; and I wish you to inform my cousin Julius that I shall take an early opportunity to wait upon him in person, and express my regrets that he has been so long kept out of the property, and congratulate him upon his accession to the estates of his great-grandfather;" and without further remark he had affixed his signature to the letter.

"Who would have imagined he would be so soft as to give up the property so readily?" said Mr. Swoop to his partner. "There really was no occasion to bring up these people from Pennsylvania. They must be paid; and then, altogether, our expenses have been enormous! All that remains to us now is to squeeze the most we can out of this amphibious animal who calls himself Captain Jack, and who walks over the course so easily. Ha-ha! A precious patroon he will make, too! Van Broek is a dolt, a fool!"

"I don't know, Swoop," Mr. Nettletop had replied to this burst of indignation from his partner. "Don't you observe the patroon writes, 'Being now fully satisfied that you spoke the truth on the occasion of our first brief interview'? Now, of course, he implies by that expression that you are *not* in the habit, as a general rule, of speaking the truth. In fact, he hints pretty broadly, Swoop, that you are an habitual liar. It's as clear a case of libel as I ever saw. Don't you think you could bring an action against him for defamation of character? It strikes me—"

"It strikes me that you're a fool, Nettletop—as big an ass as Van Broek himself," broke forth Mr. Swoop, rudely interrupting his partner's speech. "I should make myself the laughing-stock of the whole country, and I should richly deserve it. People would

say—and perhaps truly—that the cap fitted; for neither you nor I are very great sticklers for the truth, if a perversion of it suits our purpose. It's folly to try to deceive ourselves. No; we must make the best bargain we can with this half-cracked sea-captain;" and the two lawyers sat silent and moody until the arrival of the party above mentioned. When the visitors had taken their seats, and had sufficiently stared at each other, Mr. Swoop rose, with Mr. Van Broek's letter in his hand, and, addressing the Captain, said—

"Captain Van Broek—for I scarcely need say that by that, your right and legal name, you will henceforward be known—"

"Vast heavin' thar, shipmet; vast heavin'," interrupted the Captain. "Jack's my name, and John Jack's what I mean to be known by. That ar is the name I've 'dopted these fifteen year, and that ar's the name I'll stand to."

"But, my dear sir," pleaded the lawyer, "you were born a Van Broek, and you were christened Julius. That fact these certificates prove. And Julius Van Broek was the name you bore in your infancy."

The Captain shook his head sagely.

"I ha'n't no rekerlection o' what ye call my infancy," he said. "I reckon how I'm got suthin' of a idea of bein' a child, and bein' wolloped; but 'tain't a kinder pleasin' rekerlection, noways; and sometimes I has my doubts whether I wor a child, or a boy, when I wor wolloped so bad."

"You must recollect being called by the name of Van Broek," persisted the lawyer. "I appeal to this good lady." (He turned to Dame Copley as he spoke.) "She will, doubtless, be enabled to recall to your recollection some of the events of your infancy, or, at least, of your early youth?"

The lapse of years had had their effect upon old Dame Copley. She was nearly blind when she was brought forward on a former occasion. Now she was almost childish. She, however, pricked up her ears at the mention of the name of Van Broek, and, when Mr. Swoop, addressing her, said—

"You, madam, will recollect the infancy and childhood of the gentleman of whom I speak?"—

"Captain Julius Van Broek," she replied, her head shaking the while as though she were afflicted with the palsy. "'Tain't on'y the same as yesterday. Bless his little heart! I recollects him well. A sweet, interestin' infant he wor, for sure. I sees him now afore me, a-dabblin' his little head in the puddle, afore the door, till it wor full o' muck, a-purtendin' he was a-washin' hisself, and spilin' his pinafores all the while."

Captain Jack looked extremely foolish at this sally, while the rest of the party could not forbear laughing—all but little Alice, who looked up into the Captain's face, her large blue eyes dilated with wonder at the idea of his dabbling his head in the puddle before the old lady's door.

Again Mr. Swoop was about to speak, when the Captain interrupted him:—

"Avast a minit, and just look'ee here, brother," he said. "This little darlin' is my own child that I were grievin' so much arter." (He was sitting with little Alice on his knee, one of his arms thrown round her small waist.) "You told me that down to Wellfleet, and brother Martin here proved it. Aren't it so, brother?"

"It is so, certainly," replied the lawyer. "She is the child of your deceased wife Alice Martin."

"I felt how she wor suthin' akin to me when first I seed her," continued the Captain. "I were drowed

to her, as a ship's drawn by the under-current agin' a lee shore. Well, I've got the little gal, and I don't want nothin' else. 'Twor what I come back to 'Merica for. I don't want no fortun', and I ain't fit for no fortun'; leastways, I won't take the fortun' and lose the child."

"You will not lose the child," said the lawyer.

"In coorse I shall; leastways, I sha'n't be her father, which is all the same," replied the Captain.

"How, my dear sir, will you be no longer the father of your own child by taking possession of property which is yours by birthright?" asked Mr. Swoop.

"Now, shipmet, I thought how you were a lawyer," replied the Captain. "'Pears to me you're not very 'cute fur a lawyer. You tells me how I can't take this here fortun' unless I takes the name o' Van Broek. Now the little gal were the darter o' my wife, Alice Martin, as were Alice Jack when she were married, and the little gal is named Alice Jack, arter her mother. Now I want to know how I kin be the father o' Alice Jack ef my name is Julius Van Broek? Don't ye see, brother? It don't stand to reason."

"My dear Captain," said Mr. Swoop, "your name was not *really* John Jack when you married your wife: it was, as it now is, Julius Van Broek. You bear the same name as your cousin the late patroon."

"Then yer mean ter say how I warn't the husband of my own wife, Mrs. Alice Jack?" said the Captain.

"By no means," answered Mr. Swoop. "I mean to say that your wife *really* became Mrs. Van Broek, not Mrs. Jack, when you married her. The little girl on your knee is Alice Van Broek, not Alice Jack," explained the lawyer; "and truly," he added, "I think *she*, at all events, will not regret the change when she grows up."

"Tain't so, I tell yer," cried the Captain, now really angry. "'Tain't so on the sartificate; and I ain't sich an idyet as not to know that weddin's and chris'enin's ain't nothin' 'ithout sartificates. The sartificate says 'Alice Jack, darter o' John and Alice Jack.' Brother Martin's got the sartificate, and I read it not more'n a week since, and tuk a hull day to l'arn it by heart. Show 'em the sartificate, brother" (to Mr. Martin), "and convince 'em, and prove the fac'. 'Tain't as you says: I'm John Jack, 'cordin' to lawful sartificate, and Alice Jack is my darter, and I won't gin up my darter for no fortun'; no, not if 'twor the wealth of the Indies."

It required a great deal of reasoning, and a vast amount of persuasion on the part of Mr. Swoop and Mr. Martin, to make the Captain understand that his real name was the name he bore at his birth, and to convince him that, in coming into possession of the estates of his family, and reassuming his real name, he by no means falsified his marriage certificate, nor invalidated the legitimacy of his child.

At length, however, he was convinced, or rather he was brought to acknowledge that he supposed they were right, though, for his own part, he could not comprehend it: "it had," he said (meaning the law), "more twistings and twinings than a Turk's-head knot."*

The Captain having been brought to silence, and having promised to listen patiently, Mr. Swoop proceeded to explain how he had been led to entertain suspicions as to the legal right of the late patroon, and how he had acquired the information which led to the discovery of the real heir.

As, however, many of the proceedings of Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop are already familiar to the reader,

I shall confine myself to such explanations as are necessary to the elucidation of the plot of my story.

Only the day before Miles Slowbury met with the accident which resulted in his death, Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop, as has been heretofore hinted, had received an anonymous letter, in which the writer had informed them, in somewhat ambiguous language, that there was in New York a female child, who had lately been brought from the East Indies, who was the rightful heiress to the Van Broek property. This child, he (the writer) went on to say, was under the charge of a young woman of his acquaintance; and if the lawyers chose to reply to his letter, and to express a wish for further information, they must address to "M. S., Post-office, New York."

Mr. Nettletop pooh-poohed this anonymous epistle; but Mr. Swoop, who had always doubted the validity of Julius Van Broek's title to the property, had replied to it, and, of course, had received no response, since the death of the writer had meanwhile occurred. This silence, however, on the part of the writer had only served to stimulate Mr. Swoop to further effort; for he conceived the idea that some arrangement had been made between the author of the letter and Julius Van Broek, by which the lawful heir was to be defrauded, and he resolved to watch Mr. Van Broek's movements as closely as he could, without attracting observation. Time passed away, and he could make no new discovery, until he read in the newspapers the advertisements of Nancy Slowbury, wherein she stated that she had a child under her charge who must necessarily accompany her to any situation she might accept. This struck the lawyer as being a singular advertisement, and just such a one as the young woman to whom the anonymous writer had alluded would insert if, through the illness or death, or possibly the departure to some foreign land, of her relative or friend, she were thrown upon her own resources with the child to care for. On making inquiry at the newspaper-office, he discovered that the young woman had obtained a situation at Wellfleet, and also learned that Mr. Van Broek had deeply interested himself in her welfare, as well as in that of the child. From this moment he was satisfied that his suspicions were correct. He followed the young woman to Wellfleet, but, as the reader is aware, failed to gain any additional information; but subsequently following her to Niagara Falls, some words that fell from the lips of the sea-captain—her employer—while in the railroad car, led him to suspect that the Captain himself was in some way connected with the Van Broek family.

With much difficulty he, at length, succeeded in ingratiating himself—though only in a limited degree—into Captain Jack's confidence. He thus learned the main points of the Captain's history; and the more he heard the more fully satisfied he became that Captain Jack himself was, in reality, the lost heir to the Van Broek property; especially as the circumstantial evidence in favour of this theory seemed to be corroborated by the Captain's strong personal resemblance to the family of the old patroon Cornelius, as represented in the old pictures at Van Broek Manor.

Captain Jack's earliest distinct recollections were of going to sea. His recollections prior to that period were confused and indistinct; but beyond the facts that the Captain, as a child, had possessed certain documents and papers, which had been given to him by an old woman, and that these papers had been shown to a sailor on board a ship in the Indian seas, and had subsequently been lost, Mr. Swoop had been able to learn very little of the Captain's early life.

Whether through obstinacy, suspicion, or ignorance,

* A fancy-knot used on board ship, for ornamental purposes chiefly. It somewhat resembles a turban, and is very intricate.

Captain Jack could not be brought to mention names, and any endeavour on Mr. Swoop's part to press him too closely in this respect was sure to give offence. The Captain had forgotten, or he had never known, or more probably he refused to tell, the name of the old woman who had given him the papers in question, or that of the sailor to whom he had shown them, or that of the vessel on board which he was sailing at the time. He professed to be ignorant whether the old woman with whom he had lived before he went to sea was related to him or not; also of the name of the place at which he had lived before he went to sea, and of the port from which, or the vessel on board of which, he had sailed. He had lived *somewhere* in the United States, and had sailed from *some port* of the United States. This was all that could be got from him. A more impracticable subject the lawyer had never met with, whether in or out of a witness-box.

In relation to the events of his later life, however, the Captain was more communicative. When about nineteen years old he had been shipwrecked in the China seas, and, as he believed, had alone out of all the crew escaped with life; but, having thrown off his clothes to swim on shore, after the ship had struck, he had lost the papers he had been told to set such store by, and with them the hopes of the future benefits to be derived from them. He was picked up by a party of Malays, who were out with their canoes, and, although kindly treated, was detained by the Malays for three years. At length he made his escape on board an English ship, and was carried to Calcutta, where he landed, utterly penniless. He, however, again went to sea, and took the name of John Jack, partly out of a whim, and partly because he had been known as "the boy Jack" on board the ship that had been wrecked. This name he had ever since retained, and, as he averred, intended to retain as long as he should live. By dint of energy and industry he rose to command a ship in the country trade, and eventually to become part owner of three or four vessels; and when about thirty-five years old he married a young woman named Alice Martin, the daughter of a merchant at Bangalore, in the Madras presidency.

Six months after his marriage he sailed for China, in command of one of his own ships, which was laden with a valuable cargo, which chiefly belonged to his wife's brother, Henry Martin, a merchant at Colombo, in the island of Ceylon. He reached the port of his destination in safety, and sold his cargo to advantage; but on his return voyage his ship was driven on shore amongst the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and those of the crew who were not drowned were enslaved by the savages of the islands. Captain Jack was thus again detained a prisoner for two long years. At the end of that period he effected his escape to Calcutta, where he expected to find his wife, who was to have embarked from Madras for that port soon after her husband sailed on his voyage. He now learned that the vessel on board which his wife had sailed from Madras had foundered during a typhoon in the Bay of Bengal. Some of the passengers and crew had been saved by clinging to portions of the wreck until the gale abated, when they were picked up by other vessels; but there was every reason to believe that his wife was numbered amongst the lost, as she had never since been heard of, and it was reported by certain of the passengers who had been saved that a lady, supposed to be the wife of a sea-captain, had given birth to a child a day or two before the commencement of the typhoon. Another report was that the infant child had been saved by one of the

passengers, who was said to have been a relation of the lady's, and that the infant had been seen, some months later, at Pulo Penang, under the charge of an ayah, or Hindoo nurse. The Captain made every endeavour to verify the truth of these reports. He wrote to his wife's brother at Colombo, and advertised largely in the Indian newspapers; but all to no purpose. Mr. Henry Martin believed that his sister had perished on board the "Poonah," and he knew nothing of any relative of his sister's, likely to have been on board the vessel. He wrote that neither he nor his sister had, that he was aware of, any relations living in India, and their relations in the United States they had never seen; though, he added, he had heard that some person, supposed to be an American, had, about the time when the "Poonah" was lost, been making inquiries in Calcutta relative to his sister and himself. These inquiries, however, if ever they had really been made, had since ceased, and the person said to have made them had disappeared. It was, therefore, not *impossible* that this person had found out his (Mr. Martin's) sister, and had perished with her on board the "Poonah." Captain Jack read this letter, and from that time forward he became a man of doubts. He was doubtful whether he had, or had had, a child; or, if he had a child, whether that child was a boy or a girl; and he was doubtful whether his wife was living or dead. He argued that if any person had saved his wife's child, that person *might* have saved his wife also; and if the child had been saved, and had since been lost sight of, so might it be with his wife. His brother-in-law endeavoured to persuade him that the probability was that the report—which originated from some coolies who had been saved from the wreck—was false, and that there was little likelihood that the life of so young a child could have been saved. The Captain, however (the hope being father to the belief), pertinaciously clung to the idea that the report was true; and, finding that his inquiries in India were of no avail, he took a notion into his head that this doubtful American relative had returned to the United States, carrying the infant with him. He therefore determined to sell his ships and shares, to turn all his property into money, and to return to his native land, and settle down there for the remainder of his life, trusting that some day, by some means, he would discover his lost child in the United States.

This was the substance of the story that Mr. Swoop had gleaned from Captain Jack; and the lawyer was almost as well satisfied in his own mind that little Alice was the Captain's lost child, as he was that the Captain himself was really the great-grandson of the patroon Cornelius Van Broek. Could he have satisfied himself that Captain Jack was tattooed on the arm in a similar manner as was Julius Van Broek, he would not have had a doubt in the latter case. He knew that the Captain had, like many sailors, tattoo marks upon his person; but when one day at Niagara he ventured to ask Captain Jack to show him the marks on his arm, the Captain was so much affronted at what he termed the lawyer's impudence, that he dared not again revert to the subject. Unknown to the Captain, however, Mr. Swoop wrote to Mr. Henry Martin, in India, and acquainted that gentleman with his suspicions respecting the Captain's claim to the Van Broek property, and with his belief that a little girl, known as Alice Slowbury, was really the Captain's child. The answer received to this letter was in every way satisfactory.

Mr. Martin replied that some eighteen or twenty months previous a man who had somewhat the appear-

ance of a sailor had called upon him in Colombo with a little girl, and had claimed relationship with him, stating that his name was Slowbury, and that he came from New York, and also stating that the little girl was his (Mr. Martin's) niece, who had been saved from the wreck of the "Poonah." This person, Mr. Martin wrote, had told a strange story. He said that he had come out to India to find his aunt's family many years before, but, failing to do this, he had turned his attention to various industrial pursuits, and had made a great deal of money. At length he learned that a certain Captain Jack had married his aunt's daughter, Alice Martin, and after many difficulties he had found out his cousin, the Captain's wife, at Madras, shortly after her husband had sailed on a distant voyage.

He satisfied his cousin Alice of his relationship, and embarked with her to join her husband on his return from his voyage, at Calcutta. On the voyage his cousin gave birth to a little girl, and a few days after the vessel foundered in a terrific typhoon. He did his best to save his cousin and her new-born infant, by lashing her to a spar, and by securing the babe to his own person. In spite of all his efforts, however, his cousin was drowned; but he got safe on shore with the infant. As soon as it was possible, he made inquiry after the child's father, and learned that the Captain was believed to have been lost with his ship on his return from China, as no tidings had, since he left Canton, been heard of him. He had since then adopted the child as his own; but latterly he had received information which had led him to believe that the Captain had not been lost with his ship, and, moreover, that he (the Captain) was a very old acquaintance of his, with whom he had sailed on board a vessel called the "Fakeer," and whom he had believed to have perished, when the "Fakeer" was lost many years before; that, if such were the case, the Captain's name was not Jack, but Van Broek, and he was the rightful heir to a large property, which had been taken possession of by a cousin who bore the same name—Julius Van Broek. "When I first heard this story," wrote Mr. Martin, "I believed this person to be insane. He added that he had latterly lost a great deal of money, and was going to the United States with the child, and he wished me to furnish him with the address of Captain Jack. This latter request I could not comply with, since the Captain has not written to me since he left India. I don't know that I should have furnished this person with the address, even had I been able to do so, for I thought the entire story too wild to be credible. And yet, if the man was mad, there was some method in his madness, and I do not doubt that he is related to our family, as my mother's maiden name was Slowbury, and she had relatives in America. He did embark for New York shortly after his interview with me, but I have heard nothing of him since. In fact, I thought little about him after he left me. Your letter, however, seems perfectly to establish the truth of his story, and it is to be regretted that his death occurred so suddenly, and so soon after his arrival in New York, before he was able to institute the inquiries he intended, or make the necessary researches. I trust, however, that you will take the matter up, and, if wrong has been done, will see that it be righted, if only for the sake of my poor sister's child. Though I write you this long letter, I hope shortly to meet you and my brother-in-law in New York. I have long contemplated a visit to the United States—the native land of my parents—and the receipt of your letter will hasten my departure from India. I shall set out, in the course of a week or two, for Europe, by the overland route, and immediately on

reaching Liverpool I shall embark for New York. You will probably see me very soon after, if not, indeed, before you receive this letter. It is somewhat singular, as well as fortunate, that I should have arranged to visit the United States at this period."

On the receipt of this epistle Mr. Swoop had considered it advisable to keep its contents secret, and to await, at least for a reasonable period, the arrival of the writer; and within a fortnight Mr. Henry Martin landed in New York. Captain Jack was then formally summoned to appear at Mr. Swoop's office in New York, there to be made acquainted with certain matters of very great importance to his interests. And, finding that the Captain took no notice of a thrice-repeated summons, Mr. Swoop, knowing the Captain's eccentric character, arranged the visit to Wellfleet, which had resulted in the Captain being borne away in triumph, with Miss Slowbury and little Alice, to the city.

Mr. Swoop furthermore acquainted the assembled party that, in the course of his researches—through means that it was unnecessary to disclose—he had ascertained that there were *two* of the descendants of a junior branch of the Van Broek family living in New York, both of whom were distant cousins to the legal heir to the property. These persons had been well educated, and had graduated with honours at Harvard University; their families having embarked in trade, and thus having preserved themselves from the desperate poverty into which the descendants of the elder branch of the family had fallen when the disputes arose in relation to the family property. The elder cousin, Charles Van Broek, had, however, fallen into evil courses early in life, and, though he had evaded the penalty of his crime, he had been outlawed. The younger cousin, Julius Van Broek, was now in unlawful possession of Van Broek Manor.

Through his (Mr. Swoop's) influence over a certain person whom he had more than once defended before the criminal courts, and had frequently saved from condign punishment, he had learned that a transfer to the elder cousin of the documents taken by Miles Slowbury from the clothing of the lineal heir, after the wreck of the "Fakeer," when the said Miles Slowbury, and the said lineal heir, each believed the other to have perished (according to the statement of Miles Slowbury to Mr. Martin, as furnished to Mr. Swoop after Mr. Martin's arrival in New York), had taken place at a certain house in Orange Street, New York, on the return of the said Miles Slowbury from the East Indies some twenty years previous—Miles Slowbury having been a schoolfellow of, and intimate with, both the cousins; and that a short time afterwards, at the same house, the elder cousin (who, in case of the restoration of the estates held in abeyance by the State, would have been the legal heir to the property, supposing the lineal descendant to be deceased) had transferred the said documents to his younger cousin, for the sake of a consideration that it was not needful to specify—he, the elder cousin, being, in consequence of his outlawry, unable to avail himself of the privileges of his birthright.

Availing himself, therefore, of the power he possessed over this and other informants, he (Mr. Swoop) had induced this said informant, who was a companion of Charles Van Broek's, to lead him to the abode of this the elder cousin, who, under an assumed name, had been for many years leading a life of poverty and wretchedness. He had found Charles Van Broek at a miserable lodging at the Five Points, in a state of extreme destitution, and seriously ill. To his (Mr. Swoop's) amazement, however, Charles Van Broek,

instead of verifying the fact of the transfer of the aforesaid documents to his younger cousin, Julius Van Broek, had produced the original documents and certificates, which bore ample evidence of the damage they had sustained by the action of the salt water at the period of the wreck of the "Faker," twenty years previous. At the same time Charles Van Broek had asserted that the documents he had transferred to his younger cousin, Julius—believing his elder cousin of the same name to be dead—were worthless, though well executed counterfeits.

Thus the original documents, taken from the clothing of the elder Julius Van Broek, who had adopted the Christian and sur-name of John Jack, were in his (Mr. Swoop's) possession, ready to be produced at any moment. He (Mr. Swoop) was aware, as a lawyer, that Julius Van Broek, the patroon in possession, might yet give a great deal of trouble, if he chose to contest the claims of his cousin, though there was no doubt he would eventually be compelled to give up the property. But it appeared that he had determined to resign the said property to his cousin, without an appeal to the courts. There was, therefore, little more to be said touching the matter. He had been at great trouble in collecting witnesses to no purpose, and these witnesses might now return to their homes. It remained only for Captain Julius Van Broek, the present patroon of Van Broek Manor, to take into consideration the expenses he (Mr. Swoop) had incurred, and the pains he had been at in bringing about the present happy consummation.

This was the substance of Mr. Swoop's speech, to which the Captain replied, when, after a great deal of explanation, he had been brought to entertain some notion of the real state of affairs, that he was in no way obliged to the lawyers for their pains and trouble.

"Hark'ee, shipmet," he said to Mr. Swoop: "I'm pertickler obleeged to yer for findin' out my little darter, though thar wor suthin' all along which drawed me to the child, and told me she wor akin to me. But it ain't no ways convenient for me at my time o' life to change my name and come into a fortun'. I perfers the name o' John Jack, and I've got fortun' enow for myself, and for her. Besides, 'pears to me, if cousin Julius thought I wor dead, he'd a right to the fortun'; and he's better fitted for it nor me; so I'll go right away back to Cape Cod, and I wun't ha' none of it."

"Thar's one matter troubles me astonishin'," put in Amos Jepson. "It's that ar tattoooin'. I can't git over it, noways."

"Mr. Van Broek has acknowledged," explained Mr. Swoop, "that the tattooing on his arm was the work of Miles Slowbury, with whom he went to India, after he had obtained possession of the false documents. He had the painful operation performed in India, that, in case of his wishing to personate the lineal descendant of the old patroon, he might do so more readily."

"It's wonderful, though," said the old sailor. "Miles wor a smart chap; but I never thowt how he could ha' come to ekal me in that ar art. It deceived my own eyes, spite o' the feeturs o' the genelman's face bein' altogether different."

"You seem to have forgotten, brother," said Mr. Martin, addressing the Captain, "that you've found a new cousin in this young lady, Miss Slowbury, who was related to your wife—my poor, unfortunate sister."

"No, I ha'n't," replied the Captain. "It's that, and the child, as reconciles me to all this here pother. Miss Slowbury's welcome to a home with me as long as I live, and, afore I die, I'll purwidge for her. We'll all go back to Wellfleet together, she, and the child, and I, and

leave the lawyers and cousin Julius to settle this here bizness betwixt themselves."

It was vain on the part of Mr. Swoop or Mr. Martin to try to argue the Captain into a different state of feeling just then, and the meeting broke up, leaving Mr. Swoop in a very dissatisfied state of mind at the thought of being cheated out of the pickings of a long and profitable law-suit; and he determined to endeavour yet to induce Mr. Van Broek to alter his course, and to persuade him, if possible, to contest his cousin's claims, and to assure him that, if he did so, there was yet a great probability that he would come out of the contest a victor.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT, M.D.

By the phrase "the wits of Queen Anne," we generally designate the pretty numerous list of writers in prose and verse who added the graces of elegant literature to enhance the glories of successful war and busy politics which ushered in the first twenty years of the eighteenth century in Britain, a period including the reign of the last of the Stuarts. Those writers were not of the lofty and gigantic measure of their predecessors, the Bacons and Raleighs, the Shakespeares and Hookers of other days; yet still they enriched our language with many classical productions in various departments of knowledge, and wrote in a style of genuine English, which is ill exchanged for the inverted and outlandish periods of our modern writers. A few of the names thus meritorious are Pope and Parnell, Addison and Steele, Tickell and Prior, Congreve, Gay, and others of like literary eminence. But there were other writers of the time to whom belongs the title of wits, understanding those who excel in producing sentiments brilliant with fancy and genius, and often bringing together ideas between which the sober reason sees at first no possible connection. Such were Swift, Garth, and pre-eminently Arbuthnot.

Of him Pope used to say that, of all the men he had met with or heard of, Dr. Arbuthnot had the most prolific wit; and in that quality Swift had only the second place. No adventure of any consequence ever occurred on which the Doctor did not write a pleasant essay in a great folio paper book, which used to lie in his parlour, of which, however, he was so careless, that, while he was writing them at one end, he suffered his children to tear them out at the other for their paper kites. Swift said Arbuthnot could do everything but walk. This remark has been happily seized upon by Dr. Hurd in one of his dialogues, that on the "Age of Queen Elizabeth," where the speakers are Mr. Digby, Dr. Arbuthnot, and Mr. Addison, and the scene the ruins of Kenilworth Castle. "I would fain, methinks," says Addison, "make the circuit of that pleasant meadow." "You forget my bad legs," said Dr. Arbuthnot, smiling; "otherwise, I suppose, we can neither of us have any dislike to your proposal." When their discussion was ended, Dr. Arbuthnot took notice that their walk was now at an end; the path they had taken having by this time brought them round again to the walls of the castle. He said he found himself much wearied with this exercise, and proposed, therefore, getting into the coach as soon as possible.

Arbuthnot has a better claim on the admiration of posterity than mere wit, or liveliness, or sarcasm; for his moral character and uniform behaviour in life were most exemplary. "It is to be regretted," says our great moralist, Dr. Johnson, in his "Life of Pope," "that

either honour or pleasure should have been missed by Arbuthnot; a man estimable for his learning, amiable for his life, and venerable for his piety. He was a man of great comprehension, skilful in his profession, versed in the sciences, acquainted with ancient literature, and able to animate his mass of knowledge by a bright and active imagination; a scholar with great brilliancy of wit; a wit who, in the crowd of life, retained and discovered a noble ardour of religious zeal."

Arbuthnot was the son of an episcopal minister at Aberdeen, at which place he took his degree of M.D. He came to London, and at first taught mathematics, lodging with one Mr. William Pate, a woollendrapery. In 1695 he published an examination of Woodward's "Account of the Deluge." He soon got into practice as a physician, and Prince George of Denmark, husband of Queen Anne, being suddenly taken ill at Epsom, where Arbuthnot happened to be, he was called in, and became his physician. For his good and successful services to Prince George, he was, on the 30th October, 1709, appointed, by her Majesty's special command, Physician Extraordinary to Queen Anne. He became a Fellow of the College of Physicians April 27th, 1710.

Early in 1714 he and Pope and Swift engaged in a design to write a satire on the abuse of human learning, in the manner of Cervantes. The "Memoir of Martinus Scriblerus" is all we have of this satire, of which probably Arbuthnot furnished all the scientific portion. The design was stopped by the death of the Queen, on the 1st of August, 1714, which event sunk deeply on the spirits of Arbuthnot. To divert his melancholy, he made a journey to Paris, where he had a brother, a banker. His stay there was but short. A year or two after, in a joint letter from Arbuthnot, Gay, Pope, and Jervas, the painter, to Parnell, then residing unwillingly at his parsonage in Ireland, Arbuthnot thus playfully alludes to the Scotch Rebellion of 1715, and the downfall of his party: "It is so great an honour to a poor Scotchman to be remembered at this time of day by an inhabitant of the *Glacialis Ierne*, that I take it very thankfully, and have, with my good friends, remembered you at our table in the chop-house in Exchange Alley. There wanted nothing to complete our happiness but your company and our dear friend the Dean's. I am sure the whole entertainment would have been to his relish. Gay has got so much money by his 'Art of Walking the Streets' that he is ready to set up his equipage. He is just going to the bank to negotiate some exchange bills. Mr. Pope delays the second volume of his 'Homer' till the martial spirit of the rebels is quite quelled, it being judged that the first part did some harm that way. Our love, again and again, to the dear Dean. *Fuimus Tories*. I can say no more.

"ARBUTHNOT."

Having, by the death of Queen Anne, lost his courtly residence at St. James's, he took a house in Dover Street, and practised physic with good reputation. He wrote some medical works on "Aliment," and the "Effects of Air on Human Bodies," incited, doubtless, by the experience of maladies in his own person, as well as by the desire of fame as a medical author. He was afflicted with asthma, which gradually became deeper and incurable. He retired to Hampstead in hope of relief; and to a letter of Pope, inquiring after his health, he returned this answer: "I have nothing to repay my friends with at present but prayers and good wishes. I have the satisfaction to find that I am as efficiently served by my friends as he that has thousands to leave in legacies, besides the assurance of their sincerity. God Almighty has made my bodily disease as easy as a

thing of that nature can be. I have found relief sometimes from the air of this place: my nights are bad; but many poor creatures are worse. As for you, my good friend, I think since our first acquaintance there have not been any of those little suspicions or jealousies which often affect the sincerest friendship: I am sure not on my side. I must be so sincere as to own that though I could not help valuing you for those talents which the world praises, yet they were not the foundation of my friendship: they were quite of another sort; nor will I at present offend you by enumerating them. And I make it my last request that you will continue that noble disdain and abhorrence of vice which you seem naturally endued with, but still with regard to your own safety; and study more to reform than to chastise, though the one cannot be effected without the other. A recovery in my case, and at my age, is impossible. The kindest wishes of my friends is a *Euthanasia*. Living or dying, I shall be yours."

In 1732 Dr. Arbuthnot mainly assisted in detecting and punishing the frauds of what was called the Charitable Corporation. He died at Cork Street, Burlington Gardens, on the 27th of February, 1735. He had two sons, Charles and George. Charles was of Christ Church, Oxford, and took orders. George had a place of profit, an ample fortune, and a fair reputation. He was one of the executors to Pope's will.

One of Pope's most brilliant pieces, the "Prologue to the Satires," in which he vindicates his own literary and moral character, is in the form of an epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, whom he addresses, and who sometimes in the course of the poem throws in a question or piece of advice:—

"Friend to my life! (which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song),
What drop or nostrum can this plague remove?
Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?"

The poem ends with a burst of filial and friendly affection:—

"PoPE. O friend, may each domestic bliss be thine!
Be no unpleasant melancholy mine!
Me let the tender office long engage
To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death,
Explore the thought, explain the aching eye,
And keep awhile one parent from the sky!
On cares like these if length of days attend,
May Heaven, to bless those days, preserve my friend:
Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,
And just as rich as when he served a QUEEN.

"ARBUTHNOT. Whether that blessing be denied or given,
Thus far was right: the rest belongs to Heaven."

In Pope's poem on the "Use of Riches," we find the following lines:—

"Like doctors, thus, when much dispute has past,
We find our tenets just the same at last.
Both fairly owning riches, in effect,
No grace of Heaven, or token of the elect;
Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the devil."

Of these worthies, thus grouped together, Chartres seems to have been the most accomplished scoundrel. He lived in the most unblushing profligacy, never hiding his vices, but foaming out his own shame: he said he did not care one straw for virtue, but he would be glad of a character, for he could make £10,000 by it. Arbuthnot, following out the poet's idea, wrote an epitaph on Chartres, who died in Scotland in 1731, aged sixty-two:—

"Here continueth to rot
The body of Francis Chartres,
Who, with an inflexible constancy,
And inimitable uniformity of life,
Persisted, in spite of age and infirmities,
In the practice of every human vice,

Excepting prodigality and hypocrisy.
His insatiable avarice exempted him from the first;
His matchless impudence from the second.

He was possessed of ten thousand a year.

O indignant reader,

Think not his life useless to mankind!

Providence connived at his execrable designs,

To give to after-ages

A conspicuous proof and example

Of how small estimation is exorbitant wealth

In the sight of God,

By his bestowing it on the most unworthy of mortals."

One of the most amusing and characteristic of Arbuthnot's pieces is entitled "Law is a Bottomless Pit; or, the History of John Bull." The subject is the war for the succession of the crown of Spain, which began 1702, and ended with the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. Before introducing Arbuthnot's humorous strain, it may be useful to relate historically the origin of that war, so destructive to many of the nations of Europe, so glorious for the military fame of England, and so expensive of her blood and treasure. The King of Spain, Charles II, had been during his whole reign deplorably feeble, both in body and mind. As his end was visibly at hand, and he had no presumptive heir, the anxiety was great among the potentates and politicians of Europe, lest the inheritance of his vast dominions should make the new possessor too formidable, and totally upset the balance of power. There were two claimants for the prize, the French and the Austrian houses, both deriving their origin from a former King of Spain. Charles II disposed of the Spanish monarchy by his will, as if it had been a private estate. He nominated as his successor Philip, Duke of Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV. This was considered as in reality putting Spain, the Indies, and all her other possessions under the control of the already too powerful and ambitious monarch of France. England and Holland, not being ready at the moment to throw any obstacle in the way of the new arrangement, appeared to acquiesce, and acknowledged Philip as the King of Spain. But William III, whose unvarying purpose it was to check the power of Louis, organized a grand alliance against him. Although William's health was declining, he arranged his plans with the skill and sagacity of his former days. His ideas for vindicating the liberties of Europe were carried out by others, and, in after-times, Burke declared that the Grand Alliance was a machine constructed on true principles of science, which, after its author was no more, did its work in an admirable manner. The Succession War soon after began.

Now for the burlesque story by Arbuthnot. The personages alluded to were—

England	. . . . .	John Bull.
Holland	. . . . .	Nic. Frog.
Louis XIV	. . . . .	Lewis Baboon.
Austria	. . . . .	Esquire South.
Spain	. . . . .	Lord Strutt.
Portocarrew, Bishop of Toledo	. . . . .	The Parson.
Duke of Anjou, afterwards Philip V of Spain	. . . . .	Philip Baboon.

Chapter I.—The Occasion of the Law-suit.

I need not tell you of the great quarrels that have happened in our neighbourhood since the death of the late Lord Strutt: how the Parson and a cunning attorney got him to settle his estate upon his cousin, Philip Baboon, to the great disappointment of his cousin Esquire South. Some stick not to say that the Parson and attorney forged a will, for which they were well paid by the family of the Baboons. Let that be as it

will, it is matter of fact that the honour and estate have continued ever since in the person of Philip Baboon.

You know that the Lord Strutts have for many years been possessed of a very great landed estate, well conditioned, wooded, watered; with coal, salt, tin, copper, iron, etc., all within themselves; that it has been the misfortune of that family to be the property of their stewards, tradesmen, and inferior servants, which has brought great incumbrances upon them; at the same time, their not abating of their expensive way of living has forced them to mortgage their best manors. It is credibly reported that the butchers' and bakers' bills of a Lord Strutt that lived two hundred years ago are not yet paid.

When Philip Baboon came first to the possession of the Lord Strutt's estate, his tradesmen, as is usual upon such occasions, waited upon him to wish him joy, and bespeak his custom. The two chief were John Bull the clothier, and Nic. Frog the linendraper. They told him that the Bulls and Frogs had served the Lord Strutts with drapery-ware for many years; that they were honest and fair dealers; that their bills had never been questioned; that the Lord Strutts lived generously, and never used to dirty their fingers with pen, ink, and counters; that his lordship might depend upon their honesty; that they would use him as kindly as they had done his predecessors. The young lord seemed to take all in good part, and dismissed them with a deal of seeming content, assuring them he did not intend to change any of the honourable maxims of his predecessors.

Chapter II.—How Bull and Frog grew Jealous that the Lord Strutt intended to give all his Custom to his Grandfather Lewis Baboon.

It happened, unfortunately for the peace of our neighbourhood, that this young lord had an old cunning rogue, or, as the Scots call it, a "false loon" of a grandfather, that one might justly call a Jack-of-all-trades. Sometimes you would see him behind his counter selling broadcloth, sometimes measuring linen; next day he would be dealing in mercery-ware, high heads, ribbons, gloves; fans and lace he understood to a nicety. Charles Mather could not bubble a young beau better with a toy; nay, he would descend even to the selling of tape, garters, and shoe-buckles. When shop was shut up he would go about the neighbourhood and earn half a crown by teaching the young men and maids to dance. By these methods he had acquired immense riches, which he used to squander away at backword, quarter-staff, and cudgel-play, in which he took great pleasure, and challenged all the country. You will say it is no wonder if Bull and Frog should be jealous of this fellow. "It is not impossible," says Frog to Bull, "but this old rogue will take the management of the young lord's business into his hands; besides, the rascal has good ware, and will serve him as cheap as anybody. In that case I leave you to judge what must become of us and our families: we must starve, or turn journeymen to old Lewis Baboon; therefore, neighbour, I hold it advisable that we write to young Lord Strutt to know the bottom of this matter."

So the two worthies wrote Strutt a threatening letter, that if he would not give them security that he would not employ Lewis Baboon, they would clap an action upon him for £20,000 of old debts. And in due time the law-suit was set a-going.

Such is a specimen of the political wit which pleased our ancestors in the days of Queen Anne.

MUSIC ABUSED.

THE picture before you, gentle reader, is a caricature, if you please, but not an ill-natured caricature. It does not mean that you and I, and other well-disposed conscientious people, are to lay heavy hands upon the delicate

looking fop, if phrenology and physiognomy tell any truth. If these individuals would only be good enough to turn their eyes to the left, they might see an exemplification of better manners. The good-looking gentleman seems attentive to the performers at least, as good manners prompt, and which is their due, let singers sing



A MUSICAL PARTY.

art of music, banishing its votaries from well-conducted households; it does not imply that music rationally used is not a good and pleasing—I will even add—an elevating art. Its purport is simply that of holding up to ridicule certain abuses of music which none more bitterly deplore than musicians themselves.

But before I go further, some one may say, "What is the use of a caricature that does not explain itself? If not self-explanatory it must be a bad caricature; but it seems to me I understand this." Perhaps: yet, bear with my own interpretation of the musical scene as rendered by our artist. It is such a group as one meets with too often in English society of the present day. First observe the affected air of the vocal executants, the two ladies and the gentleman. One would not like to buy them at their own price; and one somehow comes to the conclusion that people so conceited-looking are endowed with the musical capacity in a very low degree. For my part, I would like to believe they are singing ill, that I might excuse what would else be inexcusable—the chat (tolerably loud, I think, from appearances) indulged in by the company. To the right of our picture (not the Herald's dexter, as though the cartoon were pinned up against one's chest after the manner of an apron, but the right, as opposite our eyes) we observe two very objectionable young men conversing—one a very silly-

never so ill, if only they are trying to please. I am glad to observe that this good-looking, well-behaved gentleman has for his partner the prettiest girl in the room, and in her face I also discriminate the amount of attention people should accord when other people sing or play. Next to this estimable couple, and, pictorially speaking, on a level with them, the eye next alights on the faces of two gentlemen, the one fronting us looking like a noted musical critic. Of them I complain that they too are conversing, the elder one, I fancy, in no subdued tone; they should know better. Placed so very near two out of three of the singers, the conversation must be very offensive. To the extreme pictorial left, and seated, I next observe two ladies, of whom it may be averred that, if they be amiable, their physiognomy, as rendered by our artist, does them injustice; the air of supercilious criticism I notice on their features is unpleasing. If, O ungentle ladies, the singers do not sing as well as you would desire them to sing, you ought not to wound their feelings by making the audible announcement—audible, it seems to be, ladies—and I, moreover (judging from your expression), fear designedly audible. You think you thereby make known the finish of your musical training; you simply illustrate your want of consideration for the feelings of others. Little lady to the pictorial right, you with the outspread fan, so nearly covering your mouth

that you would seem to veil your smile, pray remember that eyes as well as mouths can laugh; your eyes are unmistakably laughing, at the accompanist, I think—laughing, but good-naturedly. The enthusiasm of a musician is usually very ludicrous. The enthusiasm of Handel and Haydn, of Bellini and Rossini, of Mozart and Mendelssohn, and the great masters whose spirits were moved with grand and beautiful themes, such enthusiasm is respectable, and intelligent even to non-musical minds. But few wise people can refrain from ridicule of the rapture of musicians over mere quaintness of invention or dexterity of execution.

The accompanist has merit, I think; his lazy lounge backwards, his downcast dreamy eyes, his delicate fingers so gently pressing the piano keys, all show that he is free from that greatest musical vice an accompanist can manifest—the vice of loud piano-thumping, and showing off his own performance to the detriment of the singing.

Well, now, benevolent reader, you must admit, if just as well as benevolent, I have bespoken every fitting consideration in behalf of our singers, albeit assuming that they sing not well. If persons are invited to do some specific thing, and do it as well as they can, it is surely bad manners to show that we condemn their efforts. It were to be wished, however, that society were a little more particular as to the quality of musicians it from time to time lets loose upon us. I will not say that the faculty is given to few of becoming accomplished musicians, which is a proposition self-evident. I will moderate the expression into the statement that to few the faculty is given of becoming *pleasing* musicians. The truth of this no real musician will dispute; wherefore the question arises—why it is that modern young ladies (we may except the young gentlemen) are expected to learn music, whether possessing natural endowments qualifying for that art or not? This is an abuse not only of music, but, worse, a waste of time—that most precious of all things given to man upon earth. Looking at the education of English boys of the present day, there is not much fault to find in respect to music. Nobody seems to take it for granted that a boy must learn music, up to a certain point, to make him seem accomplished. If he possess musical talent and can command the necessary time, he learns to play some musical instrument, it may be, or he cultivates his voice. He does well: and it will be a source of much social and domestic, as well as personal enjoyment. If he really be a musician (which I suppose), then will his pure taste restrain him from frequenting all places and all companies wherein music is lowered to unworthy purposes, or otherwise abused. I am not afraid that our musical young gentleman will be a worse Christian, a worse man of business, a worse son, brother, or husband, for the reason of his endowment with the musical gift.

Poor girls! it is you I pity: you who are expected to learn music, whether naturally endowed with the musical faculty or not. Whether a naturally defective sense of musical time can be compensated by practice may be matter of doubt. Perhaps it can; but not so a defective organization for tune. I fancy that a deficiency of this sort is to the intending musician what colour-blindness would be to the intending pictorial colourist, an insuperable bar to progress. Be these opinions valid or not, the fact is no less certain that, although girls are so generally educated in music, a comparatively small number ever justify the training. Remember, it is no question here of *advanced* music, but *pleasing* music. A performer on whatever instrument, if only that performer correctly appreciate time and tune, will generally please, though his execution be of the slightest. Failing the

appreciation of time and of tune, especially if the instrument be one dependent on the performer's ear for tuneful intonation, no sort of execution will make the performance tolerable.

As more ladies play on the piano than on any other instrument, let us apply to the piano some special remarks. Every instrument has its beauties and its defects—its strong points and its weak ones. The especial beauty of the piano consists in the fulness of its harmony; the especial weakness of the piano in its unsympathetic nature—the difficulty of making it expressive. Whilst some instruments, of far lower general pretensions than the piano, can be made expressive by delicacy of touch or of breath, apart from mechanical dexterity, the piano's expression can only be brought out through difficult manipulation. It is the fashion to abuse poor Thalberg—to call him a “piano-puncher, a musical pyrotechnist,” and I know not what besides. Now this is unjust; and it is mostly insincere. Thalberg, more than any other man, caused the piano to sing; but, alas young ladies! Thalberg's piano music admits of no compromise. Played well and evenly, the result is pleasing; ill and irregularly, the effect is execrable.

It is perhaps in respect to vocal music—to singing—that the chief musical abuses take place. Not only here do we find the same loss of precious time, if the pupil be inefficient, as though the attempt had been to master a musical instrument, but frequently also there is a loss of health. The pertinacity with which singing-lessons are forced upon young and delicate girls cannot be too severely reprobated. Speaking in a general way, it may be safely averred that few girls remain at school until the age when continuous singing-lessons can be imposed with safety to the constitution, and permanent advantage to the voice. Nevertheless, how hard—how cruelly hard—are some young girls made to practise singing during those brief school-days, when physical growth still goes on, and the constitution is most delicate! Even if success should crown the effort, the result would not be worth the price. Health is a boon by far too precious that it should be sacrificed to a fine voice; but the worst part of the business is that ruined voice and ruined health mostly go together. And how few of those who attempt to sing have voices worth cultivating!

I intended to have said something about the silly frivolous rubbish that forms too often the staple of the songs heard at musical assemblies, but a passing word on this matter is enough for the wise.

There is one point in relation to female students of music that has been much dwelt on by critics, and mostly in a sense unfavourable to the mental endowments of the weaker sex. Not accepting the conclusion, I cannot escape the fact, explain it as we will, that, although women as a class have a far greater musical training than men as a class, yet women rarely—may we not say never—have been known to attain the highest grade of musical excellence. By the “highest grade” I do not mean executive, but creative musical talent. Mere playing or singing, however excellent, holds a very subordinate place, in the estimation of thoughtful, appreciative people, to musical composition. The difference is similar to that subsisting between the poet and the effective reader of a poem. I know of no musical composition a woman has ever composed that can advance just pretensions to any higher excellence than of *prettiness*; a result the more extraordinary that, in the kindred occupations of painting and poetry, the female mind shows to no disadvantage when contrasted with the mind of men. If in the poetical epic, and the picto-

rial historic, ladies have yet to achieve what shall place them on an equality with men, yet, both in poetry and painting there exist departments in which women outshine their male competitors, and I believe will continue to do so.

Why there should be so few women musical composers is a question I do not intend to solve. Explain it as we may, the result carries along with it a moral that commends itself to the study of all thoughtful people, but more especially those who control the education of our female youth. The moral—the teaching—is that, on the ground of special adaptability, no plea can be urged for the universality of female education in music that now prevails. Life is too short that it should be frittered away in unavailing efforts to accomplish results that organization has denied. This is the highest ground on which to deprecate the too indiscriminating attempts at making unmusical young ladies musical; yet may it prove of less avail than arguments based on a lower ground, if they appeal to self-pride. Consider, then, musically incompetent young ladies, the feelings of listeners more keenly endowed than yourselves with the musical sense! Have pity on the feelings you shock, the taste you outrage; and last, though not least, reflect on the story-telling, the fibs your incompetent displays provoke. It does not suffice that sweet Arabella or Lavinia has inflicted a torture on my ears; I could pardon that more easily than what comes next: Materfamilias fishing for compliments, and prompting eulogies. The story-telling that follows I dislike to think about. It is wicked, demoralizing, mean.

The benevolent reader will not be a little surprised at what is to come next. That a fellow of my cross-grained temper and crabbed views should have a word of kindness to urge in favour of hand-organs may seem very strange. I shall do so, nevertheless, and on grounds proving, as I hope, reason to be on my side. Hand-organs, whatever be their other defects, cannot well play out of time, and are rarely out of tune. If they only keep away from houses where nervous invalids and calculating philosophers would be disturbed, they afford much pleasure to children and to the poor. The street bands and the street fiddles are what I abominate. Of late years this is a nuisance that has increased. While a few really good German street-bands appear every season, there are numbers of juvenile performers who seem to be sent out to practise in the streets, making hideous discord, of which they themselves appear unconscious. I would allow no musicians to infest the streets without a license from the leader of the band of the metropolitan police.

ON COMING BACK TO OLD PLACES.

THERE I stand, stretching my legs, upon the platform, while the train puffs away, winding like a long dark caterpillar along the curve, and being swallowed up by a tunnel. I stretch my relieved legs after a three hours' cramped sitting, give up my ticket, and stare about me. I have no bag to carry nor to leave, not even a coat to fetter my arm by depending from it, nothing but a stick; and this I call the luxury of travelling. In this happy condition I am an independent man; porters, flymen, they are all of no concern to me, and I feel and rejoice in my freedom as I saunter out of the station into the hot white road on this fine day in early June; for I have come down into this part of the country simply for enjoyment, and to take a meditative walk by myself: enjoyment, however, not of that kind which is gay and light-hearted,

but of that kind which has a tinge of sadness in its composition; for of this order is to be considered the pleasure that we feel in coming back to an old place after many years' absence.

I suppose the sad element in the feeling is principally that of the consciousness of change—change in the scenery and the inhabitants, but, most of all, change in our own self. One of the most touching evidences, to my mind, of our origin from and our connection with the Unchangeable and the Infinite is the exquisite sadness with which the idea and the perception of the constant change and unlastingness of everything in this world seems to shade the mind of man. Change, and passing away; our earth and our hearts and our poetry are full of it; youth foreshadows it, and all our early writings have an autumn background. Manhood realizes it in stern prose, age takes it now as a matter of course, but has grown weary of it, and longs to take its dim eye from the kaleidoscope of life. But every period is more or less saddened by the contemplation of it.

And so my first impression, as I look about me upon scenes most familiar once but unvisited for twenty years, is undeniably one of sadness. So changed; all new! this is my sigh expressed in words. And changed it is indeed; all this railway, with the station and the upstart mushroom growth of houses about it—all is new. I recollect a copse of hazels interspersed with young pines and spruce firs, carpeted at one time of the year with clumps of primroses and blue masses of the dog-violet, at another time with fallen "thready leaves" or broad yellow-milled foliage, and here and there two or three frail gray hair-bells clinging to a mound and trembling in the wind; such a quiet picture as this I recollect to have possessed the site of these new staring buildings. Thus, about here at least, I find all changed, and the old familiar face of things quite gone.

I pass on, however, leaving the shops and the trim square villas with as many urns as flowers in their small front gardens, and the new church, and so find my way into old scenes again, and the pleasurable element begins to return upon my somewhat dashed spirits. I strike into the old familiar lane between the white massed hawthorn hedges. I come to that gray lichened park fence, and I could fancy myself a boy again, bowling my hoop along the smooth path, or standing on tiptoe to get just a glimpse at the deer browsing on the other side.

Yes, it was along this smooth path by the park fence that I got into such trouble as a little boy with Mr. Baconton, the staid, grave clergyman of this parish in which I am now, and which adjoins that of my old home. A good man he was, but somewhat stern, and with hardly allowance enough for the ways of children. He had been preaching for my father; and somehow or other, whether from manner or matter, or mere novelty, his sermon had struck my child's mind, had won my heart, and I wanted to tell him so. Just here it was that I met him (I was walking with my sisters and our governess), and, confronting that grave, pale-faced man, addressed him: "Mr. Baconton, that was a capital sermon you preached last Sunday." Oh, what a look he gave me! He thought my performance the result of sheer impudence; and so, I well remember, did all concerned with me. In Coventry I walked home that day, and distinctly recollect considerably catching it when I got home; yet I certainly know that I really meant well.

A trivial child's remembrance; yet, as I saunter along this path, and look at scenery, the background of my boyhood days, the principal figure seems to come back again into the picture, chiefly in many a slight

action, yet brightly coloured and strongly drawn, and no whit faded out from the canvas. I remember to have seen the fact noticed in poetry, that the great and momentous events of life are often most nearly connected in our memory with trifling events or incidents, and most vividly recalled to our recollection by our meeting with these slight things in after years.

"The smell of violets hidden in the green" may bring powerfully and overwhelmingly back some lost delight or past anguish; so may also the fragment of a song; or even the sharpening of a scythe in early dawn outside your window. Twenty years ago, in what agonized suspense you were, when, almost without hearing it, you heard that sound!

"Not in the crises of events,
Of compassed hopes, or fears fulfilled,
Or acts of gravest consequence,
Are life's delights and depths revealed.

"I drew my bride, beneath the moon,
Across my threshold; happy hour!
But, ah, the walk that afternoon
We saw the water-flags in flower!"

And so, as old events are remembered by little objects in their background, so old scenery, when we return to it, is often apt to recall to us, most clearly and sharply, trifling incidents and small events.

I have stopped, leaning on a stile, to think this out, and have set it down in words, because I suppose the experience is a common one; and most men have a pleasure in finding that their feelings are shared by other members of the great family.

But now I am close to the old park gate, and all seems very familiar indeed, as I swing it back and enter that quiet untouched abode of old memories. Twenty years have passed over it, seemingly without making in its sober and calm seclusion any the least change. There watches the old wide red Elizabethan mansion; there stretches the grass, growing barer and scantier under the trees; there sleeps the water with its swans; there stares the white broad walk in the sunlight; there, on each side of it, tower the tall chestnut-trees, crowded with white tinted spikes up to their summit, and holding them down like lamps close to the grass, as though to look for last year's chestnuts by their light; and here and there, straggling on in groups, browse the fallow deer between the dark trunks. How beautiful, how peaceful it all is, so quiet and unchanged in the warm June sun! How fair the flecked blue of that pure sky; and how cool the broad cattle-peopled shadows lying beside the leafy trees! Even that old withered thorn is still here; a mere stump, but holding up bravely one white arm of may. As I saunter on, I could indeed be a boy again, and embark feathers and leaves on the stream, running across the bridge then with eager expectation to see the flotilla emerge, silver daisy heads, golden buttercup shallows, feathers that darted and skimmed hither and thither in the least air, and, carrying too much sail, often drove ashore.

I pass on, however, through the park, and out at a small gate into a meadow—a sweet meadow, deep in grass now, but that, from some forgotten association, seems as though it ought always to have haymaking going on in it. Over this stile I used to bound, and there beyond is the small white wicket gate. Now, every step I take seems to bring me face to face with my old self: that familiar, yet strange person! that which I was, so long ago: it seems another, and yet the same. One thing I notice is the sort of freshness which seems in a measure to come to my feelings and appreciations, just wafted back to me from long ago, as I pass through these boyhood scenes. Something it seems

familiar, and yet unnatural now; much as though the scent of a hayfield were to surprise you, coming across winter tracts of snow.

And this gush of freshness, wafted over from those young, undusty days, is that, I imagine, which makes it so pleasant to indulge in a tenderly regretful retrospect, amid scenes familiar in the early years. The world's poet-heart has constantly felt it, and the world's poet-tongue has before now expressed it. Thus quaint Hood, looking back from the summit of years at the playground of boyhood:—

"No skies so blue or so serene
As them; no leaves look half so green
As clothed the playground-tree!
All things I loved are altered so,
Nor does it ease my heart to know
That change resides in me!"

The sun is behind us, and the shadows point forward in the first half of life's short day. After that, the retrospective shadows will indeed point back, and we may sometimes pause, and turn, and follow them for a pensive hour. But it cheers us, as we turn again, braced to pursue life's journey, to see that the sun has passed over and transferred his glory to that horizon which lies before us.

Another stile, and I am in the road again, and close to the village. Oh, the old cottages, and the common, and the two ponds, with the ducks in them, and the island in the midst of one, and the gray long bridge, watched over by the dark, wide-spreading cedar of the grove. How familiar it all seems; and yet, after a little closer consideration, how changed! There used to be two weeping willows beside the Rectory: others all about the place; they were quite a feature of the village. They are all gone now; and here and there a spindly little wand has taken the place of the grand drooping masses. There is the butcher's shop under the elms, poor things, all white-washed half-way up, as I remember them, and with hooks driven in them for the meat. There is not the old genial face, however, to be seen at the door of the shop, nor the portly form, blue clad, and with steel in hand. The faces are mostly very new indeed. As I walk slowly up the street, I meet, it is true, one or two known, but unrecognising looks; and there is an association with many of them, and a pleasure in having the actors in those old scenes of life present before me again. Here is the old gardener, bent-backed now: what a bugbear he used to be to us! The dread with which we anticipated the days on which he was due in the garden, if, as was often the case, we were aware of a wandering trail of small footprints awaiting him on his smooth-sown beds. And the beating heart with which, at his dinner time, we traced the long furrows, half-way buried in the rank potato growth, if, perchance, we might happen upon our stray arrow or missing ball. I address the old man, who, after a long look, recognises me, and brightens at seeing me. And now I am close to the Rectory, in which I was born, and which was the home of all my childhood and of much of my boyhood. It seems much smaller than I had remembered it: the garden not so large, the wall not so high. There it is, however, white and familiar, with its one sham window, that used so to puzzle me as a child. Ay, there is the dining-room, the study, the room in which I was born—all the same, and I so different. And the little merry sisters that ought, it seems, to run down the steps to greet me, are far away, with half a dozen children a-piece. The baby that used to appear with frilled cap and unsteady head at that nursery window is now a curate in Bedfordshire. And there is one that ought to be there with her kind, loving face

to welcome me : she is not here, but I shall presently visit her quiet lodging near at hand. I will, therefore, not speak of her now, only let her heavenly presence pervade the meditations and reminiscences of my heart. See, the side garden gate is open. Dare I, shall I walk in? Will it not be ill-mannered—rude? I cannot resist the inclination. If I meet any one, I will explain, and apologise.

Ah, how natural it seems to be here again; and yet I seem almost less to belong to the place, the more familiar it looks. Never mind; I knew that other former self, who used to play about these box-edged, thrift-edged walks; and in company with him let me pace them again, thus not without a companion who is native to the place. There is the old mulberry-tree still in its round of grass, but it has lost a large limb. There is the red-apple-tree, in a recess of whose trunk I used to love to sit and read; every other year it bore, and this must be its year of fruit, judging by the masses and scatterings of flushed bloom. That young egg-plum, put in but a little before we left, and bearing but two precious, rich, mellow, golden ovals, watched with deep interest by us youngsters, now it is a full-sized tree, and has altered the look of this corner of the garden. Let me see. O, here is what used to be *my* garden : where is the seedling laburnum that gladdened me with just one string of flowers before I left? Gone; cut down, I suppose, or transplanted. There is the jasmine trellis that marks the back entry into the garden; there the dark, walnut walk, mysterious and awful to us in the moonlight; and there the iron gate leading into the fields. How I used to long for one of its spiked rods for my spear! Here we used to feed the cows through the bars; and in these fields our early cricket games were played. Are there any burnt, worn patches now, or are stumps never pitched in the old ground? The foolish cows stand and stare, and the sheep make unmeaning and irrelevant remarks as I draw the gate back and pass away through the field into the road again, unobserved.

And now I pass the confectioner's shop—a sort of fairy land of sweets in old time; and the hybrid draper's and bookseller's, and the shop rich in string, cricket-bats, and smooth red balls, and cross-bows, and tops. And so I pass on, and come to the church.

In some curious way this church seems more connected, through my child memories, with Palm Sunday than with any other special or ordinary day. Far away in India, whenever I recalled that well-known and remembered interior, the branches and sprays of palm willow were always there, tufted with their gray or yellow downy balls, up the aisles and along the pews. There was Mrs. Hammond's portentous black silk bonnet, brought into strong relief against the soft, bobbing balls, and ever just on the point, it seemed, of pitching them over into the next pew. And always now, when I see the palm willows out, I think of that church; and when I summon the building to my mind, there at once flourish the avenues of palm. An ugly old church it is; square, red brick, high-pewed, three-decked, galleried, ceiled, overwhelmed with ponderous monuments of all styles of bad taste. But there are also in it old memories and associations which, for all its ugliness, endear it to me. It is the church of my childhood; in that cloth-lined pew I used to sit, my little white-socked feet buoyed up by a vast hassock; on that purple-cushioned seat I used to stand when everybody got up to sing; and there I used to settle down when the sermon began, and nestle close to my mother, putting my small uncomfortably-gloved hand in hers, and staring hard up at the high

pulpit just above, and at last subsiding into a calm sleep against her shawl.

I have wandered into the church, you see, through that door that I found open, and am looking about me with thoughts whose woof is of the present, and whose warp is of the past. There is that big stone urn, against that black, dark niche or cavity. How I used to wonder where the dark hole led to : whether to a subterranean passage, like Sindbad's; also, what the urn held. The sunlight comes in through the open door, and lies in a great blinding square in the aisle; and now I pass out across its warmth into the hot, still churchyard beyond.

How the population has increased of this great sleeping-place since I last stood here! Ah! I have almost to look uncertainly for a minute, for the quiet spot that I want—not for more than a minute, though. I see it, as it has been well remembered through many years. It looks quite the same; but the old-accustomed track that led to it is altered and stopped now. There it wound, a narrow path, here by the head and there by the foot-stone of a grave. I could have traced it in the dark. But now whole rows and ranks of graves and tombs have arisen between that ONE and the churchyard path, and have obliterated the little track, and taken away, indeed, from the quiet and the peace of the place, so crowded now; and though it be not a crowd of the living, yet a crowd it is, through which I must step to find my Mother's grave.

I stand by it now, and feel again that old sense of rest, and yet of sorrow. There is much that is changed; there is much that is yet the same. Those tall iron gates looking on to the churchyard, and the park stretching beyond them far away; a meditative deer standing looking at me through them, unscared, because they are generally peaceable and quiet wanderers who come this way; the gray stained wall, with those full-bosomed trees leaning upon its summit, and half way over it; chestnuts, lit with innumerable tapers, as though a shrine above the sleepers. I see all this, and I feel that I have not till now felt what a space there is between the man in his prime and the child who used to come here full of childish thoughts and regrets. Dear mother! is it wrong to say that surely there must have required but little altering to fit thee for paradise? Angelic already in soul, divine in thy meekness and lowliness, it makes me more hopeful of this weary, wicked world when I think thou wast of it. I was but a child when thou didst spread thy wings like a dove, to fly away and be at rest. I know thee almost chiefly from thy letters—"fallen leaves that keep their green;" but to read them is to rejoice that one day I shall greet thee again, and again nestle to thee, and be loved by thee in a House of many mansions, and a Home that will not change! See, I lay my hand upon the tomb, warm now in the sunshine—a worn, thin hand—nevertheless, still the very hand which loved to be clasped in thine. All day and all night the grave church tower tells thee, with its solemn tongue, that another and yet another has passed of those hours that separate thee from earth's great Easter-day. The Christmas morn and the summer sun flood thee with their beams; the grass dies or grows; the birds come with the spring, or flit with the autumn: but, without change or fail, from that solemn watch-tower which ever looks towards eternity, the sleepless sentinel Time turns without fail towards thee with the news when another hour has ended. Most subtly suitable is it that such a watch-tower, with such a sentinel, should ever be erected amid the silent waiting thousands of the Dead. They

have little else to listen to, and little do other sounds and other news concern them. "*A city is taken; a nation is destroyed; a flood has swept away half a county!*" Tell this to them, and there is no flutter, no response. But we may almost fancy a thrill when that iron tongue proclaims, "*Another hour has passed, ye Sleepers; there is an hour less for you to wait!*"

"The clock
Tolls out the little lives of men."

Yes, of living men; but it also tolls out the long waiting silence of the dead. From our point of view, life is passing as the clock strikes; but from *theirs*, it is death that is dying, and the hours drip, drop after drop, from his veins.

Well, I have lingered here a long while; it seemed, indeed, the goal which was to terminate my wanderings among the old places of my youth. And now the clock tells me that I must retrace my steps. So I go back by another way now, to the new station: another, yet also a familiar way, across other meadows and cornfields, and by a brimming stream. Everywhere I pass some trifling, yet to me touching memory of childhood or boyhood; every point has for me its interest; everywhere I meet with something familiar; everywhere with something that is changed. There I caught my first trout—ecstatic moment! There used to lie the old tub that, on days "marked evermore with white," we used sometimes to be permitted to haul out. There—but a truce to this. What is interesting to me is not necessarily so to my reader, and it is time that I should end.

Yet, sooth to say, there are few to whom it may not be of some interest to have recalled to their heart meditations and reminiscences that are, in truth, much what themselves have felt, or will feel, or could feel, on revisiting the scenes of childhood, and coming back to the oldest places that we can boast of in this our brief span of life. The background will differ, the feelings will assimilate; and each can shift the background to his taste.

I can fancy, it pleases me to imagine, my readers thus employed. See, this one is standing—waved thither by my wand—not in country lanes, but with just the same fresh, kindly feelings in dingy Leicester Square. For him the light of other days rests upon and has made lovely the dreary inclosure, with its sooty statue, the foreigners with their pipes and hats, and, most of all, some straight blank house—now, perhaps, fallen to be a third-rate eating-house—to which yet clings, in his mind, the sacred name and style of *Home!* He turns up an alley towards Newport Market. The very butchers, calling "What-d'ye buy?" touch him with the tenderest sentiment; and his chestnut-trees, lit with tapers, are indeed the flaring lamp-posts, and for the ripple of waters he must go to Trafalgar Square. But he has come back to the old place, and that fact has made it, however really prosaic, yet to him poetic ground.

Yes, there is undeniably a great charm in the coming back to old places. Thus, as a mere matter of pleasure in travelling, who would not choose the same old route again, and perhaps yet again? The remembered familiar points with their kindly associations, recalling a time in our life of feelings, of experiences, now, perhaps, for ever of the past! Life is too short to afford this indulgence often; there are so many new scenes to be visited that there is little time for recurring to the old ones, and the whirl and buzz of the machinery is against poetic, abstracted, and dreamy meditations, in this workaday life. Still it is pleasant where it is possible. We may say, however, that, as a rule, youth inclines to new scenes, maturer years to a lingering among and

recurring to the days that are no more, and the scenes among which they passed; and that, to the old man, who is yet not quite so old as to be irreconcilably hostile to the idea of moving in the least from his present abode, there are few things more keenly if sadly delicious than a day's run down to the scenes of his boyhood, and a meditative saunter among the old places of his youth.

THE GARMENT OF GOOD LADIES.

Would my good lady love me best,
And work after my will,
I should a garment goodliest
Gar make her body till.*

Of high honour should be her hood
Upon her head to wear,
Garnished with governance so good,
No deeming should be her deir.†

Her kirtle should be of clean constance,
Lacit with lesum† love,
The mailles‡ of continuance
For neuer to remove.

Her belt should be of benignity,
About her middle meet;
Her mantle of humility,
To thole‡ both wind and weit.

Her hat should be of fair haying
And her tippet of truth;
Her patee‡ of good panning,†
Her hals-ribbon of ruth.**

Would she put on this garment gay,
I durst swear by my seill††
That she wore never green nor gray
That sett‡ her half so weel.§§

ROBERT HENRYSON, d. 1508.

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| * Cause to make to fit her body. | † Injury. | ‡ Lawful. |
| § Eyelet-holes. | Bear. | ¶ Thinking. |
| ** Neck-ribbon of pity. | †† Salvation. | ‡‡ Became. |
- §§ From Angus's "Handbook of Specimens of English Literature," just published by the Religious Tract Society.

STOCK EXCHANGE NOTES.

II.—PROMOTERS—GETTING UP A COMPANY.

JOINT-STOCK companies, whatever their character and description, must be set on foot by somebody or other: they do not spring up quite spontaneously, like mushrooms in a night, though some of them in our day have a similarity remarkably striking, both as to their birth and after-history, to certain specimens of the fungus tribe. In old days, when companies were organized only for legitimate purposes, the promoters were the pioneers who, often at their own charges, prepared the ground for undertakings which were felt and acknowledged to be needed by the public, and who looked for their reward in the permanent success of the adventures which they inaugurated, and which, as a rule, they continued to manage and control after such adventures had matured into prosperous establishments. Such is not by any means a description of the promoters of our day. The object of the modern practitioner is generally much more simple. He does not usually anticipate any very permanent connection with the company he aims to establish: all he wants is merely to set it afloat, so that its shares may become a saleable commodity in the market; a climax which, being once reached, ensures him a round sum in payment of his labours, and enables him to cease or to continue his connection with the company at his pleasure. Promoters are of various grades and classes, though it is to be feared that few of them just now are, in a moral point of view, to be rated very high. That some have been no better than needy and unprincipled

speculators—not to call them swindlers—there can be no doubt; while it is on record that others have matured the golden schemes they bring forth in the retirement of a debtors' prison. However, the public, who supply the shareholders, always look rather to the character of the speculation than of the speculator; and if the former be really sound and promising, it is pretty sure to get afloat by some means or other—the reason being that there are always capitalists to be found ready to back up a plausible scheme which offers them a high rate of profit upon their advances.

By way of illustrating the promoter's operations, we may sketch the birth of an imaginary company. The reader may suppose it to be a gas company, a banking company, a loan company, or whatever he chooses: we will call it the Blank Company. The promoter has some original and cherished ideas in regard to it, and he imagines, and wants all the world to imagine, that, once fairly established, the result will be a brilliant success, represented in figures by 30 or 40 per cent. at the least. The essential thing to be done is to call the attention of the public to the scheme; and this can only be accomplished by advertising extensively in all the principal newspapers. In order to win the public favour, he must make his prospectus attractive by making it evident that there is a reasonable prospect of solid gains, and he must also make his scheme respectable by a list of "good" names as directors—names representing social position and property, and which are familiar to the trafficking community as those of persons of judgment and responsibility. The obtaining of "good" names is the grand difficulty with promoters of small experience or of unfortunate or dubious antecedents; and there is many a scheme, which would otherwise have become popular and perhaps gainful, that has been extinguished in its birth and lapsed into limbo because this first obstacle could not be got over. A clever tactician, however, will often succeed in bagging good names where an ordinary man would fail: he will persuade the capitalists to his own views by representations not to be gainsaid, and by holding out prospects of certain advantages which must accrue to them as directors whatever be the ultimate upshot. It may be fairly assumed that in practice considerations not of the most creditable kind have an undue weight with professional men, seeing that the lists of directors ordinarily contain the names of bankers, lawyers, agents, and others, to whom the operations of a company must bring business in some shape or other.

The prospectus of the Blank Joint-stock Company, Limited, is published some fine morning in all the daily papers, and it sets forth in glowing colours the promise of a large and certain gain *in futuro*, and, displaying the names of its directors and officers in capitals, informs the public that a large proportion of the shares have already been taken up, and that applications for further shares will be received up to a specified date. The capital of the Blank Company, we will suppose, is fixed at one million sterling, in fifty thousand shares of £20 each, with power to increase to a million more. The "large proportion of shares," mentioned as being already taken up, have not, in fact, been disposed of at all, the declaration of the advertisement being a mere figure of speech: they are merely held back, to be dealt with hereafter according to circumstances; a certain proportion of them only, sufficient to qualify them for office, having been allotted to the directors. What will be done with the bulk of them depends upon the response the public shall think proper to make to the appeals of the prospectus now so widely circulating.

If the Blank Company is well received, and applications for shares pour in from all quarters, you might suppose, as each applicant forwards his deposit-money with his application, and signs an agreement to pay the rest of the call upon allotment, that now all the disposable shares would be allotted at once, so that the company, being put into possession of the capital it wanted, might begin its business and proceed to realize its grand profits. Nothing of the kind. The soundness of the scheme being in some measure proved by the eagerness of the public to share in it, the public, before sharing, must be made to pay for its good opinion. Instead of allotting the whole of the shares to outside applicants, a distribution of a very moderate portion of them is effected, and that on scientific principles: people applying for a hundred shares perhaps obtain twenty; others, willing to have twenty, get five; and this distribution is made geographically as well as proportionably, the shares being sent to a distance preferably to being scattered about the capital; they are dealt out to widows, single women, divines, schoolmasters, and retired tradesmen, rather than to wide-awake Londoners, who would watch their opportunity to dispose of them again in a profitable market.

Meanwhile the bulk of the shares remain in the hands of the direction, or of that section of them who have been the backers of the promoter and have furnished him with cash to set his scheme afloat—who, instead of allotting them at par, put them into the hands of two or three clever "riggers," who immediately proceed to "rig the market," as it is termed, with them, in order to sell them at a premium. This is easily brought about by a process which may be paralleled with that carried on at mock auctions, where buyers are made to give more than goods are worth by the arts of colluding bidders. It is, in short, nothing better than a mock auction, which takes place on the Stock Exchange, when two or three persons, who alone have shares to sell, buy and sell to each other at an abnormal price. The sales thus effected, of course, are a sham, but they are quoted as realities in the money articles of the newspapers, which spread the falsehood all over the kingdom; and thus the public reads next day that Blanks are gone up two or two and a half per cent., and on the day following that they have reached three and a half or four per cent. premium; and, knowing how desirable it is always to buy in a rising market, they now rush to their brokers, eager to invest. The rig, if cleverly worked, may perhaps raise shares to an average of £5 per share premium, and those who have kept them in hand for this purpose will be sure to sell them before there is time for prices to fall to their natural level.

Supposing thirty thousand shares to be thus dealt with, out of the whole fifty thousand, the profit netted by the "rig," or, in other words, the profit drawn by the practice of a foul deception from the pockets of the public, will amount to £150,000; a sum sufficiently large to give all the directors what is called a "good pull" out of the concern, as well as to pay off the promotion-money due to the promoter, which latter sum may vary from £3000 to £5000 or £10,000, according to the sum total of the company's capital. On the receipt of this bonus, which all along has been the sole object of his labours, the promoter is virtually quit of the Blank Company, Limited, just as a shore pilot is quit of a ship when he has navigated her into blue water; and, like the pilot, he is ready from that moment to embark in any other venture as soon as you please, leaving the Blank henceforth to the care of its managers and conscientious directors. It seems, on the face of it, an enormous act

of plunder, this fraudulent abstraction of £150,000 from the share-buyers at the very outset of a new company; but custom and conventionalism have shorn this system of much of its moral turpitude in the eyes of commercial men ("You need not buy the shares unless you choose," says the rigger), and, though men of integrity shrug their shoulders at it, most hold their peace, knowing that capitalists of repute, standing high in the estimation of society, have amassed the bulk of their wealth in this way, and are by like methods continually adding to their store. On the other hand, it is not, after all, ruinously mischievous to the shareholder: at most he gives but twenty per cent. for his shares beyond what he should have given; and, if the Blank Company prospers, as there is every reason to think it will, so far from having any ground of complaint, he will have abundant cause to rejoice in his investment.

In the above rapid sketch we have supposed that the scheme of the promoter was a sound one, based on a fair prospect of success, and capable of being carried out successfully by ordinary means. But the majority of the schemes attempted to be set afloat are not of this satisfactory description. They are not based on any public want, known or unknown, but on the sole wants of the ingenious individuals who concoct them, and who, hungering for their promotion-money, to which they will be entitled as soon as the shares are allotted, strain every nerve to get their bubbles launched, and, unfortunately for the public, too often accomplish their purpose. The promoter, in this case, does not seek his directors among capitalists of known stability: he knows that to do that were but to lose his labour. He resorts to a different class, and employs various methods to compass his ends. By the publication of specious advertisements he can bring around him a crowd of unemployed waiters on fortune, and by the promise of lucrative posts in the new company can often secure influence in respectable quarters tending to further his object. If he cannot get capitalists in his list, he can, at least, get names which look well in print, with such gratuitous additions, or letters of the alphabet, as it may be safe to add to them. To induce their owners to consent, it is not at all unusual for him to offer to qualify them for the direction by the free bestowal of the forty or fifty shares which they are bound to hold; and if this is not enough, he will fix the fee to be paid to the directors at each of the board's weekly meetings at a figure much higher than is customary. Bribery, in short, to use a plain word, is the method resorted to by the promoter of a commercial bubble, though in the application of it he has to be wary and cautious, and will instinctively avoid any overt act, and especially the perpetration of any document that can possibly throw light on his proceedings.

Some years ago, twenty or more, during the influx of new schemes which foreshadowed the panic of 1847, the prospectuses of the bubble-blowers were remarkably flowery, and high-flavoured, and lavish in golden promises: the operators of the present day seem, for the most part, addicted to a totally different plan, preferring to address themselves to the public in a modest and deferential manner, as if conscious that their value must be patent to all observers, and that there is no necessity for dwelling largely upon that. Not that they are sparing of their print: on the contrary, they are diffuse enough, often turning over the longest column; but they are rarely eager or over-persuasive, and speak as if serenely content to stand or fall on their simple merits. There is, doubtless, wisdom in this plan; the very absence of instance and energy of language being apt to strike the discerning reader as an evidence of

solid character able to dispense with such commonplace appeals. The wonder is, not that the promoter of a bubble should affect, in his prospectus, to be supremely confident, and to say indifferent, but that he should be able to get his advertisements before the public at all. He has no money to spend; he has to print his prospectuses on credit; and yet it costs from £1500 to £2000 to advertise a new scheme in all the newspapers with sufficient persistency to get it well before the general public. How is the thing done? It were hopeless to expect that the newspaper proprietors would lend their aid in this difficulty. They will not abate a doit of their dues, or lengthen their short credits with their agents a single week, for any consideration that could be adduced. The directors, if applied to to advance the necessary funds, are found to be as poor as the promoter, or they affect to be so, and will not "see their way" to an investment with returns so doubtful. It is plain, in such an emergency, that, unless some expedient is hit upon, the proposed company must, after all the labour bestowed on it, fall to the ground. There is, however, no immediate hurry, since the company can choose its own time for starting into existence, and few running expenses have to be met, no offices being as yet engaged, or salaried servants employed; so that there is time to look about and see what can be done. If the necessary amount can be raised by general contributions, to be repaid to the contributors in shares when the concern is afloat, well and good; and it does happen now and again that that is done, the different directors and expectant functionaries dribbling forth their quotas unwillingly rather than allow all their labours to be lost and their hopes disappointed. But if no such mutual endeavour is made, or, from inability, can be made, there is yet one desperate measure that may be resorted to, all other expedients failing. Speculation runs all risks in London; and, even for a company with a dozen directors who cannot pay their printer, a speculator may be found who, at a proportionate premium, will hazard the sum in demand. So Mr. Moses is called in to the rescue, and, after weighing the pros and cons, and diving into the very heart of the mystery at his leisure by the aid of all existing documents, he comes out with his proposal at last; proposing to advance the needful £2000 on the condition of receiving shares, among the very first that shall be allotted, to the amount of four, five, or six thousand pounds—or it may be more than that, according to his idea of the risk he runs—as soon as the company shall be afloat; consenting, at the same time, to forego all demand should the company not float at all.

By aid of the usurer the prospectus comes out grandly in all the morning papers, buttressed by a notice in the money-articles of some of them, and from time to time the attention of the public is kept alive by renewed insertions. If shares are applied for in numbers, all parties are in high glee; if not, the riggers are set to work, and the concern is hoisted into notice and ephemeral popularity by the means already described. When a sufficient number of shares has been applied for to justify the directors in allotting them, the allotment takes place. Mr. Moses realizes his huge profit, the promoter bags his promotion-money, the directors are at liberty to dispose of their shares, and the expectants are installed in their posts. What are the prospects of a company whose capital is thus atrociously forestalled and swallowed up as fast as it comes in, and what dividends are likely to fall to shareholders when there is no remunerative business to do, and scarcely any funds to do it with if there were, the reader can imagine for himself.